

VZCZCXRO9435
RR RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHPG #1146/01 2880924
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 150924Z OCT 07 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9710
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 001146

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

EUR/NCE FOR ALEX TRATENSEK, EUR/ERA FOR WILLIAM LUCAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2012
TAGS: [EUN](#) [EZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [KV](#) [IR](#) [BM](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: CZECH COMMENTS IN ADVANCE OF THE EU GAERC

REF: A. STATE 143223
[1](#)B. STATE 141316

Classified By: Deputy Political-Economic Counselor Martina Strong for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Emboff met with Vaclav Balek, Director of the Department of Common Foreign and Security Policy regarding the upcoming October 15-16 General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). Of note were his comments on Iran, Russia, Chad and Uzbekistan, as well as his negative assessment of the Portuguese EU Presidency pro-forma approach to addressing GAERC topics. End Summary.

Iran

[1](#)2. (C) Balek confirmed that the EU members have come to agreement on the wording of the conclusions to be released at the GAERC next week. Among other things, the EU will reaffirm its support of the dual track strategy and consider additional new measures. Balek commented that the discussion on the text was tough, mainly due to resistance from the Italians, Spanish, Austrians and Portuguese. He does not anticipate that this text will change, even if the Portuguese press for further debate of the topic at the GAERC, since the Foreign Ministers, in the opinion of Balek, are unlikely to tinker with a document that every EU member has already agreed to. If the debate is re-opened, however, Balek feared that the GAERC would not issue any conclusions on Iran, because it would be hard for the EU to reach consensus again, and especially on stronger language.

Russia and the Portuguese Presidency

[1](#)3. (C) Balek had no immediate reaction to our specific points on Russia. He did, however, speak about other matters related to Russia and noted that the Portuguese have "listened a little too well" to the Russian points made during discussions in New York on a range of issues. He commented that the Portuguese are now proposing that the EU "explore a cooperative framework" that is perhaps more expansive than that which exists with other third countries. In his opinion, the Portuguese are pressing the framework idea because they are desperately trying to identify a deliverable for the upcoming October 26 EU-Russia Summit. The GOCR has clearly expressed their displeasure to the Portuguese about an enhanced status for Russia, according to Balek, and the GOCR has gone one step further by pressing for the controversial issue of "frozen conflicts" to be added to the agenda.

Chad and Syria-Lebanon Missions

[1](#)4. (SBU) The GOCR expects that discussion of the proposed deployment of a peace-keeping operation to Chad will consume a fair bit of time at the GAERC. There is widespread EU consensus in support of this mission, in contrast to the

proposed Syria-Lebanon border mission, but there are many details related to financing the Chad mission which still need to be addressed, especially the expensive airlift operations. Due to the anticipated cost of such a mission in Chad, Balek opined that it is unlikely that there will be funds available to cover an ESDP mission to the Syria-Lebanon border. Also of note, the Belgians will provide a brief on the related topic of the situation (fighting and refugee issues) in the Congo.

Uzbekistan

15. (SBU) Although not one of the topics covered in our demarche, Balek flagged for USG attention that on October 15 the Political and Security Committee (PSC) will take up the issue of extending the current sanctions against Uzbekistan, which are set to expire, if not renewed. Balek indicated that none of the EU member states want to lose these sanctions, so he expects they will be renewed. He also indicated that there is general agreement about maintaining the arms embargo, but that there is some disagreement (expressed by the Dutch and Germans) related to the current visa ban list, which may be suspended.

Burma

16. (SBU) This issue will be taken up at COREPER on Monday morning. According to Balek, COREPER will discuss whether to impose wider sanctions or whether to wait for the return and subsequent briefing by UN Special Envoy for Myanmar, Ibrahim Gambari. The GOCR supports the shared U.S-EU position on this matter and concurs that it is essential to press China, India and Japan to push the Burma regime.

PRAGUE 00001146 002 OF 002

Pro-Forma Discussion Anticipated on MEPP, Iraq, Syria-Lebanon Border, Kosovo, WTO

17. (SBU) Balek expressed his displeasure that the Portuguese have chosen to propose such a huge agenda for the GAERC. He feels that this approach will allow for very few issues to be discussed substantively. Both Iraq and the WTO, he expects, will be pro-forma discussions without noteworthy developments. Since Wolfgang Ischinger, EU Representative for negotiations on Kosovo, will not be present at the GAERC, Balek anticipates that the discussion on this issue too will be very brief. He noted that the Middle East Peace Process and the Syria-Lebanon Border issues will not be addressed at the GAERC since they have both been moved to the agenda for the FM dinner at the meeting in Lisbon on October 18.

Graber